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AUTHOR Nissani, Helen; Hagans, Rex

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes integration activity, or the linking of education with human services, in the northwestern United States as a basis for developing technical-assistance and policy-analysis capacity. Given the historical, social, and political contexts of integration, a developmental continuum for integration activity is presented. New roles and relationships are described and the six key elements (family centered service delivery, comprehensive service focus, prevention orientation, empowerment focus, local community focus, and synergistic procedures and process) of successful integration are outlined. A story of a challenged Northwest family is presented to illustrate regional needs, underscoring the need for a more "family friendly" system of support. The integration of education and human services provides such support while strengthening families and reducing agency dependency. Three figures are included. Appendices contain four descriptions of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's current service integration partners. (Contains 10 references.) (LMI)

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THE Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

PROGRAM REPORT

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THE POWER OF INTEGRATING EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES: ACHIEVING THE POTENTIAL OF THE NORTHWEST

Helen Nissani

and

Rex Hagans

November 1992

Child, Family, and Community Program
Rex Hagans, Acting Director

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Portland, Oregon 97204

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THE POWER OF INTEGRATING EDUCATION

AND HUMAN SERVICES:

ACHIEVING THE POTENTIAL OF THE NORTHWEST

Helen Nissani

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Rex Hagans

November 1, 1992

Rex Hagans, Acting Director
Child, Family, and Community Program

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 S.W. Main, Suite 500
Portland, Oregon 97204

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A "CHALLENGED" NORTHWEST FAMILY

Joe and Maria Casey live in Sumtown (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA). Joe, (in his mid thirties) has been laid off for two years now from his job at (a local wood products mill, fishing, mining, or oil exploration industries). His wife, Maria, (also in her thirties) has been trying to make ends meet by working as a nurse's aid in the local adult care facility during the day and holding down a part-time fast food restaurant job at night. Joe and Maria have three children: Sally age seventeen, Dick age nine and little Jane age 4.

Joe is very depressed about his inability to find meaningful work. A number of people in Sumtown have seen him routinely drunk as early as 4 PM. Joe's substance abuse problem keeps him out of the home for long periods of time. Consequently, when young Dick comes home from school there is no one to greet him, assist him with his homework or to ask him about his day at school. Jane is left for many hours with a local home care provider. The provider has talked to Maria repeatedly about Jane's constant ear infections, but with her very limited income, Maria is ineligible for free medical care, which in any event is not readily available in Sumtown.

Maria grew up in a large extended family of (migrant farm workers, Southeast Asian refugees, etc.). Her family is (constantly on the move or located far away) and is unable to give much support to Maria, Joe, or the children. Dick's teacher has sent home notes indicating that he is not progressing well in school due to many absences this year. Maria's limited skills in English not only prevent her from assisting her son with his studies, but also limit her potential to move out of low paying service industry jobs. Maria leaves for work before Dick goes to school and returns long after he has returned home.

Although she is worried about Dick's poor school performance and Jane's earaches, when questioned, her most urgent concern is about her daughter Sally. Sally has always been a high achiever in elementary school, but in her adolescence she has spent a great deal of unsupervised time with her friends, and little time with her immediate or extended family. Maria is worried that Sally, like herself, will become a teen mother. Sally is already in trouble with the law for shop lifting, and Maria confides that she and Sally barely communicate.

INTRODUCTION

There are numerous collaborations and coordinated efforts serving Northwest families. While many families are successfully served in this manner, it is becoming apparent that the complexity of issues facing families, especially those living in poverty, is rapidly increasing. These families require solution approaches that support the family as a unit, those that help to foster the role of the family as the

primary nurturer, educator and provider of its dependents. All families, including those served presently by coordinated and collaborative efforts require integrated services that are increasingly "family friendly". These timely and respectful services require only one point of entry into the helping organization or agency. The preceding story illustrates in practical terms the need for these solutions in the Northwest. It addresses the diversity and complexity of issues that many poor Northwest families face daily.

The Casey family is not presently experiencing a serious crisis. However there are certainly indicators that this family is in a "challenged" state. Families living in poverty are significantly "challenged" to provide needed services to their dependents. All families to some degree may be at a given time be challenged by a health care crisis, a special needs child or a host of other difficulties life may present. Given our existing fragmented system of social service, health and education providers families will find it difficult to ascertain the social, economic, medical, and psychological supports it needs to strengthen its resources against difficulties and crises it may be forced to face in the foreseeable future. Significantly "challenged" families find it difficult to nurture the healthy growth and development of their dependents. As a result we increasingly find larger numbers of children who require special interventions and support. These children are not succeeding in school. Integrating education and human services can enhance this family's ability to overcome these challenges and strengthen them so that all their members can become productive Northwest citizens.

SCHOOL-LINKED INTEGRATIONS

Northwest schools are finding it increasingly difficult to successfully educate children. Many children and families in this region are experiencing increased poverty, crime and social isolation and decreases in medical, social and educational supports necessary to insure their health and well-being. In this climate of increasingly challenged families, schools are examining new ways to support families in their important job as educators, nurturers and fiscal supporters of their children. In an effort to assist schools the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) has undertaken research and development work related to options for the Integration of Education and Human Services.

The family's ability to nurture and support the education of their children has a direct impact on the child's ability to succeed in school. We have chosen to study school-linked integrations because it is our belief that education is an irreplaceable element in achieving success as a citizen, parent or in the marketplace. The role of schools in the integration process is critical.

Our initial work *A Conceptual Synthesis and Review of Community-based Integration Activity* outlined effective contexts for integration, and some criteria for identifying effective integration activities in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. This document builds upon the foundation of our previous work with a detailed description of the developmental nature of integrations, identification of key elements of successful integrations, and an examination of four service integration partner projects in this region. The intent of this paper is to begin to describe integration activity in the region as a basis for developing technical assistance and policy analysis capacity. Integration efforts in the region continue to expand rapidly at both policy and programmatic levels. Due to this dynamic situation, NWREL will continue to investigate additional service integration sites over a five-year period.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-LINKED INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

As NWREL's Child, Family, Community program studies service integration activities throughout the region, researchers will gather information regarding the history of these efforts, missions, structures, developmental characteristics and successes. A study of the key elements of an integration and the projected outcomes for families and/or children will be of central concern to the project. Our study of integration outcomes will be used to assist Northwest schools and other health and social service agencies to measure the success of their efforts to strengthen and support families.

The research data will provide NWREL with information to design diagnostic tools and a technical assistance process to assist current and/or developing integration efforts in planning effective strategies to strengthen families through integrated services. The diagnostics will be designed and field tested by current and future service integration site partners.

The service integration partners briefly described in this paper, (see appendices for detailed descriptions) represent integrations at various stages and levels of development. Some reflect policy level integration efforts, others are more programmatic in design. These selected sites represent various forms of integrative activities, at various stages of development, in a variety of settings both urban and rural, with a diverse number of potential integration partners. The information gathered from these sites will enable NWREL to identify additional developmental sites for future study, to understand the characteristics of successful efforts, and to design technical assistance that is guided by response to the experiences of practitioners.

THE HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS FOR INTEGRATIONS

There is particular emphasis on the position or role of the family in our emerging definition of these new interactions between agencies. In our previous paper *Integration of Education and Human Services: Conceptual Synthesis of Community Activity* we set forth the historical context for the establishment of integrations. This prior work traces the evolution of social institutions and their respective responsibilities vis a vis families. Prior to this century the family and the school (for example) shared equally but in carefully delineated ways the responsibility for child welfare. Today these roles, have changed as family supports and strengths, have changed, eroded, and become imbalanced and institutions have increasingly found themselves addressing concerns that were once thought to be the sole responsibility of the family.

Institutions tend to be poor mothers, they cannot support children in a qualitative manner and have few resources to address basic needs. As we move into the 21st Century, NWREL proposes that in order for schools to successfully address the educational and non-educational needs of its children and families, the following two underlying social paradigms must be established:

1. "The role and responsibility of families must be re-established as the primary institution assuring the well-being of the individual."

2. "An integrated system for delivery of public services in all these domains must be developed, one that focuses on and supports the efforts of families rather than treating recipients as isolated individuals." (NWREL, 1991, p. 10)

The social context provides a second perspective for those seeking to strengthen integration efforts. S.L. Kagan addresses this social context in her work, *United We Stand: Collaborations for Child Care and Early Services*. Kagan addresses the ecological perspective. This perspective is based upon a body of research that highlights the interrelatedness of individual, family and community. According to Kagan, the ecological perspective has many practical consequences. It helps us to understand that the once discrete entities of work and home and school have become intertwined. We became aware that if we impact one aspect of an individual's life, for example work, then we have in fact affected other aspects of that person's life, such as family. Likewise if we impact one aspect of a child's life, such as education, then we impact the family and other aspects of the ecology of that child's social, emotional and physical world. A systems perspective for addressing service delivery problems has thus emerged. Children can no longer be treated or educated without understanding and influencing the ecological system of support surrounding them.

A third key aspect is the political context. C. Brunner in his work *Thinking Collaboratively* (1991) introduces the need for the integration of human services and education in a call to state and local policy makers to foster collaborations that truly benefit children and families. In this political context, Brunner cites L. Schorr's (1988) work and others as guides for the development of new state agencies or structures that are not constricted within categorical boundaries, related to professional disciplines or bureaucratic needs. He has entitled his introduction or rationale, "**Fragile Families,** Fragmented Services". Once again the call for integration is based upon the need to bolster, support and strengthen families.

COORDINATION, COLLABORATION AND INTEGRATION - A DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

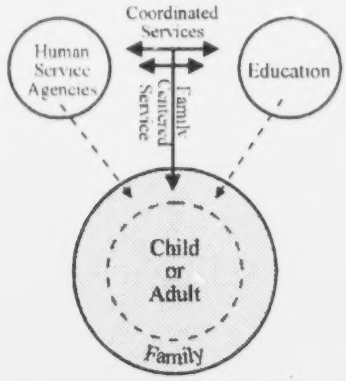
According to S.L. Kagan (1991) there is much debate in the literature regarding the use of the terms cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. Despite all of this confusion, Kagan supports a "common view" which suggests a hierarchical relationship amongst these terms. In the broadest terms, she suggests that cooperation leads to coordinated efforts which in turn may evolve into collaborations. Melaville and Blank (1991) suggest that the significance of the collaboration is that it brings separate organizations into a new structure. NWREL posits that there is yet one more step in this hierarchical process; the integration. For the purpose of our discussions integrations of education and human services is defined as: **The coordinated, comprehensive collaborative efforts among agencies and schools that support and strengthen the family's ability to nurture the growth, development, and education of its members.**

The following diagrams and discussions offer the reader NWREL's view of these new developmental processes along a three stage continuum. The nature of the boundaries surrounding education and human services is important to our understanding of coordinations, collaborations, and integrations. As integrations develop, boundaries become more flexible and education and human service

agencies develop new methods of operations and interaction with each other. The position of the family is key to each point on this continuum. In this process, the family moves steadily from the fringes as a recipient of services, to the center of attention, and decision making; an included partner in the design and implementation of the services rendered by the integration effort.

Coordination: The **coordination** of services occurs when two or more agencies or programs are knowledgeable and supportive of each other's services. Referrals may be given across agencies, clients and information are shared (see figure 1: arrows, two directional). Staff from each agency in the coordination may meet to discuss community issues. (The solid circles surrounding these players in the figure below indicate that there are definite boundaries surrounding the range of services to individuals and/or families.) There are separate missions for each organization. The family, adult or child, is the receiver of services. Clients are usually not directly involved with the planning or implementation of the service. Services provided through these coordinated efforts are more comprehensive in nature than services rendered by each agency individually. Coordinated services most usually reduce the number of contacts with agency personnel. (The solid arrow to the family versus the broken line arrow indicates this enhanced service.)

Figure 1
Coordination

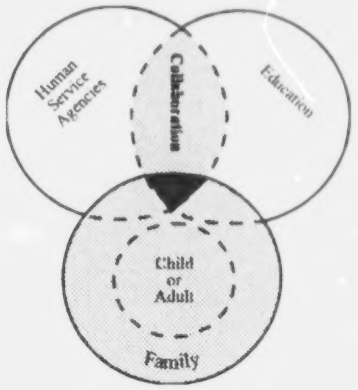


Collaboration: A **collaboration** in contrast, involves two or more programs or agencies planning and commonly conceived set of projects, often jointly funded, that typically cannot be accomplished by a single agency or program. These projects are commonly joint supervised and staffed. These agencies remain advocates for the education, health or welfare of their clients, but accomplish these tasks in collaboration with other agencies. Although each system or agency has committed itself to successful outcomes, most find it difficult to find sufficient resources to successfully address the complex issues of today's families. By pooling their resources, individual agencies find that they are better able to address the each family's complex needs.

The overlapping circles in the figure below indicate the programs developed as a result of the collaborative effort of both agencies. The missions of each agency are shared in the collaboration, but the structure of each agency itself remains largely unaltered. The family is now a more central player in the design and implementation of service. This is indicated by the close proximity of the family

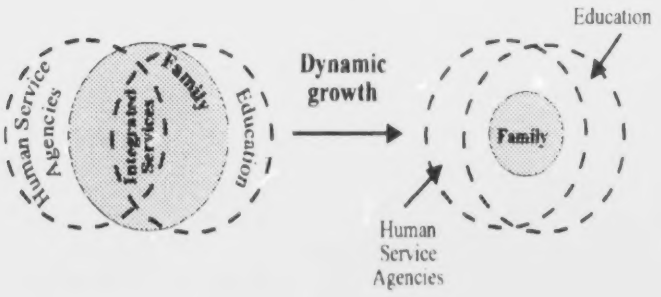
circle to the collaborating agencies. While many collaborations are focused upon the family as a unit and include the family in the service delivery plan, a large majority remain focused upon individual clients. The most effective services of the collaboration are those designed with the family unit's participation. (These are indicated by the intersection shaded darker.)

Figure 2
Collaboration



Integration: Integration differs from coordination and collaboration in that a new and different entity is developed which alters the boundaries of existing agencies or programs. Integrations throughout their dynamic development work to diminish the boundaries representing barriers to integrated services. As integrations continue their development we can expect that they will attempt to eradicate all barriers and synthesize their services creating a strong new mission. Along with a new mission different supervision, service delivery strategies, and in some cases newly defined professional roles, are developed. The programs of the integration reflect the mission of the new formed entity. Families are now central to the integration effort, the services rendered are ecological in nature, and families are strengthened. Thus a solid circle now surrounds the family, and as integrations develop the families begin to play a more central role.

Figure 3
Integration



NEW ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

As communities struggle to realize the process described along the previously described developmental continuum, new roles and relationships among existing agencies emerge. Often these roles or relationships are accompanied by new entities who serve either as catalysts to produce change or ongoing facilitators of the process itself. Briefly, these new roles may be described as follows.

Catalysts

Often times community-based advocacy groups and/or reformers give rise to the conceptualization of an integration effort. While catalysts can be individuals, often times groups are formed informally with a mix of agency staff and individuals. These groups or individuals initiate changes to the ways we are currently "doing business" as educators and human service providers. Their understanding of the historical, social and political contexts of their communities, in which institutions and policies have been developed give them insight to facilitate such change. According to the Center for the Future of Children's Study on School-linked Services (1992), "schools are an attractive (partner) for reformers seeking to improve the health and welfare of children... Schools provide sustained contact with children." This report describes these reformers as innovative and creative planners that understand all staff levels within agencies. They know how to access senior officials of agencies and possess diplomatic and intercultural skills needed to work across agencies.

These community reformers act as a catalyst to change. Many integration efforts have resulted in their efforts to restructure agencies and schools. Some reformers have sought legislative support for their integration efforts, other have solicited support from business communities or a combination of business, private foundations and public advocacy groups. All have responded to the overwhelming evidence that existing agencies and schools are not able to meet the complexity of needs of today's families and their children.

Facilitators

Frequently the scope and complexity of community-based attempts to restructure services, as well as the constraints of existing agencies, requires yet a more structured and direct approach to this change process. Often times a new "entity" both formal and informal in nature, begins to emerge. While the catalysts described above often work in existing agencies, programs, or governmental positions, facilitators of change are needed to manage the use of this new "entity" to support the ongoing implementation of the integration process. These entities do not replace existing agencies but rather compliment them. They may be "permanent" with formal, full time staff; "temporary", depending upon volunteer efforts; or some creative combination of the two. Whatever form they assume, their existence is usually key to the move from catalytic action to sustained, balanced, and well managed effort. It's these "entities", and their facilitators rather than the individual programs which they produce, that are the primary focus of NWREL's development work to support successful integrations of education and human services.

SIX KEY ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

A study of current integration efforts, a distillation of common solution approaches and current research in family studies, human and child development, school restructuring, and other related fields has given rise to the identification of the following six "key elements" of successful integrations:

1. Family Centered Service Delivery - The family rather than the child, or a specific adult is the service unit or client. All aspects of service delivery incorporate the perspective of the family unit. Services rendered to individual families are culturally relevant to the family unit.

2. Comprehensive Service Focus - Services encompass more than one specific need of the family unit. Projects or programs of the integration address two or more needs of the family, sharing agency expertise for the benefit of the entire family.

3. Prevention Orientation - The integration seeks to strengthen the family unit rather than remediating its weaknesses. A proactive approach to services rather than a reactive approach is applied. A preventive approach makes community services available to families so as to prevent future interventions or treatment.

4. Empowerment Focus - Families or members of families are encouraged to take an active role in the development, implementation, and evaluation of integrative services. Programs are designed to assist families to build support networks, capitalize upon their strengths retain their autonomy and avoid agency dependency. This approach is modeled in the integration itself, through consensus building decision making processes, shared vision and mission statements, and collaborative leadership.

5. Local Community Focus - Whether the integration is a state wide attempt to alter the system or a local attempt to impact service delivery, the integration of services will be defined in terms of local community needs. A state-wide integration that examines systems offering family support will need to be developed in a flexible manner to encompass the diversity of needs of individual communities. This "grassroots" input becomes a part of the decision making process at all levels of integration.

6. Synergistic Procedures and Process - This element suggests that agencies work to eliminate unnecessary regulatory measures, policies, or activities that support fragmented services to families. This may entail legislative advocacy at state, federal or local levels. This approach suggests the braiding of funding to promote cost reduction and cost benefit. It may include the participation of public/private partnerships to enhance resources, and to insure community investment in the process.

Integrations that incorporate the above six elements are most likely to succeed in strengthening families. When families are strong, children are nurtured and supported in their learning; costly educational and social services interventions are minimized.

NEW SOLUTION APPROACHES FOR THE CASEY FAMILY

Integration efforts that incorporate the above mentioned elements in their program design to create a "seamless" system of support for families can be of great help to the "Casey" family described at the outset of this discussion. Given our existing fragmented system of social service, health and education providers, the Caseys will have to fill out countless forms to access medical attention for Jane, afterschool care for Dick, and English as a Second Language classes for Maria. Each member of the Casey family would be treated individually with no or little consideration for the impact of the treatment or intervention on the remaining members of the family.

Dick will be unsuccessful in school and Sally may be in danger of dropping out of school. Jane may be starting school with a heavy loss. Neither Dick nor Sally's teacher may be aware of the family's complex and critical situation. Both teachers and parents will be anxious and frustrated by the lack of communication between the family and the schools. Fragmented services necessitate that Maria spend a great deal of energy chasing resources for her family. Given this time consuming effort and her full time employment there is little hope that Maria will access educational resources for herself, i.e., a high school equivalency diploma or literacy program.

A case worker helping Maria to find better employment may not be able to help her husband access substance abuse treatment. Various case workers, health practitioners and educators assisting the Casey family will have little or no occasion to meet and discuss the impact of their interventions on the whole family. After numerous meetings with countless experts who attend to "fixing" individual family woes; who for the most part do not acknowledge and build upon this family's strengths and efforts to cope with these daily issues; Maria's and Joe's self-esteem will most likely be diminished. This diminished self-worth can prevent Maria and Joe from tackling some of the solutions themselves, thus creating an agency dependency relationship with the helping agencies.

Integrations in the Northwest can make a remarkable difference for families like the Caseys. A family service worker/advocate assigned to assist the family as a unit would help and empower Maria and Joe to access all the services and support they need to sustain a healthy family. This family case worker would advocate on behalf of Maria, Joe and their children, modeling problem solving and conflict resolution skills that would empower them solve and/or avoid problems in the future.

If comprehensive services were available at the local community school, Maria would not have to travel to many different locations to receive assistance. Because all families visit the school, the stigma of receiving services for a "needy family" would be reduced. This integration's family advocate may assist Maria and Joe to complete an information release form that would provide Dick, Jane and Sally's teachers with needed information, so that they can be more responsive to the needs of the children in school and offer parenting support, child care, latch key and a host of other supportive services.

An integration of education and human services may offer many prevention options for the Casey family. Perhaps Sally could enroll in a pregnancy prevention program, Jane could receive treatment for her earaches, Joe could enroll in job re-training course offered by the Job Partnership and Training Act, (JPTA) programs, Maria could complete a high school diploma or attend literacy classes and the entire family may enter into a substance abuse prevention program. In fact, if only half of the above mentioned services were available, the Casey family, not unlike many other low-income "challenged" families would find themselves supported and with hope for a healthy and happy future.

CURRENT NWREL FINDINGS: FOUR SERVICE INTEGRATION PARTNERS

For our study of integration efforts four Northwest regional partners were selected to initiate our work in this new emerging field of study. The following four developmental sites were selected by nominations derived from expert practitioners, and regional and state leaders. Each site is involved with pre-k though grade 12 educational programs and has shown some evidence of sustained change or the potential for such change. They are representative of the range of activity currently underway in the region. We do not regard these partners as models, but rather as early efforts in an emergent and complex field. It is our intention to work closely with these and other partners as we develop means to assist the growth and development of these widespread efforts to integrate education and human services.

1. **The Portland Leaders Roundtable**, Portland, Oregon

2. **Lincoln County Student/Community Assistance Program,** Lincoln County, Oregon

3. **The Puget Sound Early Childhood Assistance Program,** King and Pierce Counties, Washington

4. **Youth Information Management Task Force**, Billings, Montana

(See Appendices for detailed description of site's structure, mission, developmental characteristics, successes and future plans.)

Many of the six key elements (**Family Centered Service Delivery, Comprehensive Services, Prevention Orientation, Empowerment Focus, Local Community Focus, and Synergistic Procedures and Process**) can be found in the daily operations and plans of the four service integration partners. Each of these partner sites are attempting to develop unique, timely, cost effective strategies to support families in the Northwest.

At this initial stage of developing a means to assist integration efforts across the region, NWREL seeks to verify the importance and relevance of the six "key elements" to the conceptual and programmatic work of its service integration partners. This analysis and self-study process may provide a sound basis for beginning technical assistance to a broader group of regional efforts.

Although each of the service integration partners serve different populations with differing needs and solutions, each partner has incorporated some of the "key elements" in their planning, implementation and evaluation. In some instances the

development of the integration has revealed the need for future change in its operational methods to incorporate these essential ingredients to success.

Our preliminary review of this initial set of service integration partners indicates that the key elements seem to be directly relevant and reflected in their operations. For example: all four partners were created by a **Local Community Focus** to develop solutions to a wide array of issues. Business leaders together with other community leaders devised Portland (Oregon) Leaders Roundtable's unique approach to establishing policy and locate resources for change. Likewise, the vast array of agencies in Lincoln County, Oregon organized a variety of solution approaches to solve the issues confronting their children and youth. The Puget Sound Early Childhood Assistance Program, (ECEAP) located in Washington state, developed its local Area Agency Model to bring together local stakeholders to more efficiently broker local services to young children and their families. The Youth Information Management Task Force in Montana brought together local Yellowstone County service providers to increase sharing and the exchange of information about local troubled youth. All of these programs developed local solutions to local community needs. They exhibited great flexibility to change existing processes for the betterment of their community's citizens. Although some information about models from other locations was used by some of the partners to develop their programs or processes, all of these service integration partners altered these models to best fit the needs of the local communities.

Synergistic Procedures and Policies can be found in each of the four service integration partner sites. The braiding of resources to develop their programs or policies occurred in each program. No one program has relied on a single monetary source to support their efforts. This braiding of resources has encouraged many new players to participate in the integration activity. As a result many new agencies have for the first time shared information and have developed agency relationships, policies, and procedures that will decrease categorization, streamline services, and increase communication.

The increased flexibility, communication, and cooperation resulting from synergistic procedures and policies coupled with the local focus on community needs has in many cases led to the development of increasingly **Comprehensive Services**. When families receive these comprehensive services they can address a number of concerns simultaneously, reducing the exhausting efforts to locate entry points to individual services. Streamlining services, avoiding needless, duplication, pooling expertise for greater outcomes are all themes addressed in varying degrees by the service integration partners.

Although **Prevention Orientations** are often associated with activities for families of young children, such as the those served by the Puget Sound's ESD ECEAP, many other intervention and treatment programs have prevention activities designed to reduce the numbers of individuals requiring costly interventions and/or treatments. The Leaders Roundtable, Youth Information Management Task Force and the Lincoln County Student/Community Assistance Programs were all initially designed to develop policies or programs for youth. Some of these integration efforts have developed universal points of access for unidentified youth experiencing difficulties. This prevention effort helps to identify issues early and to seek remediation for the youth prior to the development of a crises. Still others are extending their services to younger populations in hope that costly remediations can be avoided.

An **Empowerment Focus** and **Family Centered Service Delivery** systems are conceptually most recently considered to be critical to the success of education and human service integration efforts. The Puget Sound ESD ECEAP program demonstrates a thorough understanding and implementation of these concepts. Parents play an integral role in the development and execution of services. Programs for ECEAP parents and children are designed to capitalize upon their individual strengths to meet their needs. The Leaders Roundtable and the Lincoln County efforts demonstrate empowering practices that encourage youth and their families to find alternative solutions to their concerns. The most recent policies developed by the Roundtable and the supportive personnel of the Lincoln County Student/Community Assistance projects seek to build upon individual strengths rather than remediating weaknesses. As other integrations develop over time, evidence of continued and expanded involvement of parents or community members in all arenas of program design, implementation and evaluation will be observed. Services to families rather than individuals are rapidly being created to meet the ecological needs of their members. A significant shift in the design of programs from those serving individuals, (child, youth, adult) to serving families as a unit emerges as integrations develop over time.

CONCLUSION

Building upon NWREL's previous *Conceptual Synthesis and Review of Community-Based Integration Activity*, this paper has sought to define and conceptualize the development of Integrations of Education and Human Services. Given the historical, social and political contexts of development, a distillation of solution approaches, and emergent principals six "Key Elements" of integrations were identified. A challenged Northwest family "story" provided the reader with a realistic portrayal of regional needs. This story underscored the need for a more "family friendly" system of support. Integration of Education and Human Services provide such support while strengthening families and reducing agency dependency.

A preliminary examination of the relationship of the "Key Elements" to the four partner sites gives NWREL direction for future research and development. Descriptions of the four service integration partner sites found in the following appendices, provides the reader with an understanding of the many ways integrations are developed, their various points of entry, their missions and philosophy, structure, developmental characteristics, successes and future plans.

NWREL will continue in its efforts to develop a technical assistance process for integration of education and human services that is supported by the growing knowledge bases in this diverse field of study. Analysis of the identified key elements of successful integrations will illuminate desired outcomes which are driving integration efforts. This set of outcomes will be used to develop critical indicators and related options for measuring their achievement. The elements and options for specifying and assessing critical outcomes will become the basis for a diagnostic process that will assist Northwest schools and human service agencies to better plan and assess their current and/or future integration activities. This process will be further specified and field tested with NWREL's service integration partners over the coming months.

APPENDICES

The following four descriptions of NWREL current service integration partners represent integration development at various stages. Some are policy integration efforts, others programmatic. An array of entry points to this activity is illustrated as well as each site's developmental characteristics, successes, and plans for the future.

THE PORTLAND LEADERS ROUNDTABLE

Introduction

Education has increasingly become important to business leaders in communities around the country. Education is critical to the healthy development of our economies and democratic system. Since the early 1980's business communities of numerous states have been meeting to assist with the strengthening of educational systems to insure economic viability. These groups are commonly called roundtables. The Portland Leaders Roundtable was formed in 1984 by a combination of key business leaders, city and county executives, and the Portland Public Schools. This Roundtable was initially conceived to serve the city of Portland Oregon, but has been expanded to serve the city and its surrounding county, Multnomah. Multnomah County is 465 square miles and its population is approximately 562,000. It is the smallest county in size and the largest in population in Oregon. There are 12 school districts in this county, the largest of which, Portland Public Schools, which serves 53,000 students.

Structure

The Roundtable is a forum for policy and resource direction. It does not operate programs. The forum acts to build consensus amongst stakeholders and policy makers to meet the Roundtable's established goals. An eight member Executive Committee invites up to 30 other participants to meet annually, use their collective influence and resources to solve problems, establish policy and collaborate on implementing a 10-year action plan called "The Portland Investment."

The Roundtable members join for a one year commitment, each participant signs a written agreement to serve and selects activity options. Leadership is shared, executive committee members rotate to preside and host meetings. There is no one chair. All members make a commitment to the common vision and agree to do whatever is necessary within their own organization and spheres of influence to take the agreed upon actions.

The Roundtable is funded by the general funds of the participating players which include: city, county, United Way, state, public schools, the Private Industry Council and private employers.

Schools play a prominent role in the Roundtable's organization. The Superintendent of Portland Public Schools was a founding member. In addition two Portland Public School Board members serve on the Roundtable, as well as three staff persons who are included in a 15-person administrative team. Currently a liaison to the schools from the City of Portland staffs the Roundtable.

Mission

"The Portland Leaders Roundtable helps young people overcome barriers to self-sufficiency and productive citizenship by supporting families and promoting changes in and cooperation among employers and institutions."

Developmental Characteristics

Initially the Roundtable was established when four civic leaders, the mayor, the superintendent of Portland Public Schools and two prominent businessmen met and agreed to convene a Roundtable for six months to address the problem of rising youth unemployment. Joint concern of both business and agencies, as well as technical assistance Brandeis University Center for Human Resource and the Institute for Educational Leadership, provided support for the efforts of this group. These initial efforts led to the improvement, refinement and expansion of the Roundtable.

In its first five years Roundtable's efforts were concentrated on providing impetus for the development of innovative programs and approaches to meet the major problems of youth unemployment and high school drop-outs. Sixteen pilot projects were generated. These were jointly funded by participants of the Roundtable, such as the Private Industry Council, Portland Public Schools, the City of Portland and Multnomah county. Many of these programs were conceptualized and generated out of Roundtable hosted meetings of teachers, counselors, principals, juvenile court workers, family service providers, parents and youth. These programs are predominantly designed with at-risk youth as the targeted population. They range from a Financial Service Academy for promising youth who may wish to work in the field of financial services to STEP, a summer training and education program geared especially for low-income, minority youth. The work of this first phase of development gave information needed to create the vision of "The Portland Investment", the 10-year plan.

As the Roundtable now enters its second phase of development, it has adopted both a new measurable goal and new objectives to reach this goal. The goal assures that by 1996, 100 percent of Multnomah County youth will complete high school with employability skills. The Roundtable has developed six organizational objectives to meet this goal. They are as follows:

1. To demonstrate active political leadership on behalf of children and youth

2. To provide information on the targeted (low income, ethnic minority) children and their progress through school

3. To identify critical elements and strategies demonstrated to produce desired outcomes and hold each other (Roundtable participants) accountable for implementing these into core systems serving families and children

4. To actively participate in the development and implementation of employability competencies as requirements for high school completion and monitor their implementation to ensure that selected competencies meet workforce needs and increased employment options for targeted youth

5. To advocate for improved teacher preparation in workforce and diversity issues

6. To build stronger direct employer involvement in education and training programs

To meet this goal and the related objectives, a new action plan has been developed. This action plan, entitled "Partners for a Caring Community," is based upon the premise that all sectors of the community can more effectively support youth and their families by collaborating, implementing common strategies, and utilizing existing resources in innovative ways. The Roundtable visualizes this effort in terms of a circle of support to families, with children and families at the center of the circle surrounded by community which encompasses transportation, education, employment, housing, recreation, safety, health and welfare, and churches.

This second phase marks the growth of the integration. The process has evolved to recognize the holistic nature of interagency collaboration. The Roundtable has begun to move synergistically to facilitate the removal of agency or programmatic barriers. Initially, although families were imbedded in the mission of the Roundtable, community agencies designed programs with youth as the targeted client. A shift of focus to the family unit can be found in the Roundtable's work on objective #3 (see above). The five critical elements identified by the Roundtable for this new objective indicates a shift to an ecological understanding of youth issues. The family, as a unit, is now the focal point for service delivery. The five critical elements identified to meet objective #3 include:

a. Family involvement in support of the child's success

b. Family centered, collaborative agency, community and business environments

c. Clear, consistent expectations for youth, across time, agencies, programs and work places

d. Youth and family accountability, program accountability and system accountability

e. Continuity of a caring adult for each young person

Members of the Roundtable believe that the five critical elements described above must be incorporated in all delivery systems. To answer this call to action, the Roundtable has recently established community-based teams in each of four catchment areas of four high schools in Multnomah County. Their goal is "to engage families, schools, youth, human service agencies, community agencies, governments, businesses and other community support organizations in actions that lead to collaborative, interactive, service delivery for families and children." The Roundtable convened a conference in December 1991 to begin their work on "Partners for a Caring Community". Summaries and notes from this activity indicate strong community commitment to this process.

Successes

The Portland Leaders Roundtable has been "recognized nationally as having one of the most effective collaborations between private business, government and schools

to improve the chances of at-risk youth for education and economic advancement." The Roundtable is one of 10 school-to-work transition partnerships to be examined in a U.S. Department of Labor study on Exemplary Work-Based Learning Strategies. In 1989 the City of Portland was featured by U.S. Health and Human Services as part of the President's Youth 2000 Initiative. The Roundtable has been selected nationally by numerous groups to portray a city's response to the challenges of preparing youth for the future.

Future Plans

In a letter to citizens, employers and service providers of Multnomah county, the Roundtable calls for continued action on the Partners for a Caring Community project. They invite individuals and groups to add their energy, commitment and influence to this county-wide effort, stating "together we will do what none of us can do alone". The Roundtable is committed to extend its new efforts to all sixteen high school catchment areas in Multnomah County. A June roundtable activity is being planned to address the remaining targeted catchment areas.

The efforts of the Portland Leaders Roundtable have rapidly expanded. Currently efforts to solidify Roundtable managers to become "key leaders" of this expansion process is underway. In addition to the Partners for a Caring Community effort, three additional committees are working to widen the family support circle and enhance opportunities for its youth. Marketing, data and employability competencies committees are also actively expanding and developing new strategies to further the goals and objectives of the Roundtable.

Most recently the Roundtable has decided to staff its efforts full time. A job description is in the process of development and the Roundtable will obtain two full time staff to support its efforts. The current city-school liaison will continue her efforts to develop and nurture the city of Portland's contribution to this effort.

The Portland Leaders Roundtable's goals, objectives and activities will help strengthen challenged Northwest, low-income, minority, families by promoting the integration of education, human resource and employment agencies, thus insuring opportunities for its youth and families.

THE LINCOLN COUNTY STUDENT/COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Introduction

Lincoln County is located on the Central Oregon coast. The county has a population of 38,800 in a 992 square mile area. This county is served by a single school district, which serves 6,400 students. A past superintendent of Lincoln County schools brought to the county renewed vision and commitment to better the lives of these coastal community's students.

Prior to his tenure in Lincoln County this superintendent had experienced a court appearance for an adjudicated youth whom he discovered had countless encounters with a wide variety of educational, social, health and human service personnel. To his dismay, the superintendent learned that none of the twenty or so case-workers from these services had ever communicated with one another to prevent this youth's incarceration. Together with the help of many Lincoln County community agencies who had already established an interagency council that integrated the efforts of the schools and human service providers, an increased emphasis and commitment on the part of the school district to this effort was realized throughout Lincoln County.

This system began with a Student Assistant Program initially designed to prevent dropouts and later conceived to include substance abuse prevention issues. This Student Assistance Program later incorporated numerous early prevention community efforts linked to elementary schools, health issues, teen pregnancy, and alternative education.

According to the Student Assistance Program's literature, substance abuse affects at least 30 percent of the Lincoln County student body. While alcohol and drug abuse are not "the school's problem", the effects on these abusing students and/or their families have caused a decline in academic performance, and an increase in absenteeism, tardiness, disciplinary referrals, classroom disruptions, drop out rates and vandalism. The above effects limit Lincoln County students' ability to compete with other state high schools for college placement and employment. These concerns gave rise to the creation of this multifaceted approach to serving Lincoln County children, youths, and their families.

Structure

The Student Assistance Program was created to serve youth who had problems associated with academics, peer groups, family or social interaction in general. A study of these conditions revealed a priority need to address substance abuse issues. Students' academic performance was severely hampered by these adverse conditions. The program served students who were chemically dependent, experimenting with drugs and/or alcohol, returned from substance abuse treatment programs or those that are concerned with a family member's use, abuse or dependency. This integration has several levels of programs and services to counteract the above conditions.

1. **Direct Services to Students**--these included identification and assessment of student needs, interventions such as mentoring, support

groups, peer helper programs, parent conferences, and referrals to appropriate local agencies for additional support and help.

2. **Staff Development Services**--these helped staff to better support the needs of these youth and families, through inservice training on topics ranging from how to facilitate student support groups, promoting student wellness, teaching refusal skills and a series of workshops regarding adolescent treatment issues.

3. **Community Awareness Services**--these included locally hosted television programs, a film series, nationally prominent guest speakers on substance abuse, parenting, and wellness, a well as community participation in a national Drug Free Schools program and many other activities.

These activities were coordinated at each school site by a Building Core Team. Community Core Teams were convened in each high school attendance area in the county, and included the entire catchment area's middle and elementary schools. This Team, led by the principals of each building, met regularly to discuss referrals made to the Team by school staff or a specially designated Student Advocate. Often times, at the high school level, students self-referred to the Advocate who would take the case to the Team. Parents of identified students were encouraged to participate. The purpose of the Team was "to enhance services and to advocate for youth."

The work of the Core Teams and Student Advocates led to the design of many other community programs to support the needs of the Lincoln County children and youth. These services included: Mary Harrison Elementary School's Family-School Partnership Program; Bright Beginnings, a parenting education program, mentoring program; and a teen mother program complete with on-site childcare located at Taft High School. Summer schools were offered at Taft, Newport, Waldport, and Toledo and an alternative approach to high school completion through a teacher assisted packet program was developed.

Funding for these projects came from a wide variety of community sources: the local Children Youth Services Commission, State Drug and Alcohol funds, and Student Retention Initiatives. This funding, coupled with designations from existing budgets of all schools in the district and staff time from Children Services Division, were all braided together to insure services to needy children and families.

Mission

"The Student/Community Assistance Program Model is a result of taking the broadest possible view of the nature of student problems while keeping an eye to specific practical steps for its effective management." This implies the co-involvement of schools, human service agencies, and the community at large. Comprehensive health education, health services, substance abuse prevention and intervention education are the most viable solutions to current problems experienced by Lincoln County youth. This integration effort prevents, supports, identifies, assesses, intervenes and refers students and families to appropriate local services.

Developmental Characteristics

At the onset of this integrative effort a large number of community agencies and individuals lent support to the formation of the Student Assistance Program, which was later broadened to include all ages of children in the community. In 1986 the Student Retention Initiative Committee was formed and in 1987, this initiative received state funding which was applied to the Student Assistance Program. Other key collaborators included the Lincoln County Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and Sacred Heart's (Hospital) Adolescent Recovery Program. In 1990 the Student Assistance Program received funds from the state Drug and Alcohol Programs office.

Initially the Student Assistance Program utilized the services of both student assistant program facilitators and drop-out prevention facilitators. As the integration of these collaborative services progressed, and the scope of work broadened to include younger children these job descriptions were merged to create "Student Advocates". According to a Lincoln County drug and alcohol counselor, the student advocates were "committed, compassionate and devoted individuals who were able to facilitate positive changes in young, troubled students who otherwise might be lost and forgotten."

Other evidences of integration development include the increase in diversity of players involved in the process. By 1991 numerous offerings were delivered to all levels of this integrative effort: student, staff and community.

The braiding of resources, the creation of a the new position of student advocate and the local agencies' willingness to collaborate in a synergistic fashion to eliminate barriers to service faced by Lincoln County youth is clearly evident in this integration effort. This element may have been the driving force to the success of this project. The community core meetings were described as a "bringing together of a variety of agencies whose primary responsibility is serving the needs of children and their families". The combined knowledge and expertise of the members provided an opportunity for community building and a unified approach to problem solving.

Unfortunately, in 1992, due to mandated budget cuts resultant from the Oregon's tax limitation initiative, Measure 5, many of the programmatic efforts of the Lincoln County's Student/Community Assistance effort have been dismantled. There are various speculations as to why these services were discontinued. Most prevalent is the general lack of public understanding of the profound affects this program had upon students and staff at the public schools. It is hoped that, over time, Lincoln County residents will find needed resources to reinstate some of these important supports for children and families.

Successes

According to the Program's literature each year of the Student/Community Assistance Program saw an increase in referrals made by staff and students. In addition, the drop out rates reduced from 10 percent in the 1987-88 school year to 3.64 percent in 1989-90: a significant indicator of the overall success of the Program's offerings. School district administrators also indicated a perceived shift in the attitudes of staff with regards to "at risk" children and families. Staff at all

levels developed a compassionate regard for the barriers experienced by these students, and large numbers of personnel attended uncompensated training sessions held in the summer and on weekends.

Perhaps most importantly, many students received comprehensive services that over the long-haul helped prevent them from falling through the usual cracks in a diversified system. The Lincoln County Student/Community Assistance Program was developed as a "seamless" system of support for Lincoln County's children, youth and families.

PUGET SOUND EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Introduction

Washington State's Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECEAP) was authorized by the legislature with the 1985 Early Childhood Assistance Act. In 1986 a blueprint for ECEAP developed by the State Department of Community Development in consultation with a 30-member expert advisory committee was approved. ECEAP was designed as a state funded comprehensive family focused preschool program, to help low-income preschool children succeed in the public education system.

Drawing much of its design from Head Start, this family-centered, state funded, preschool program currently provides education, health, parent involvement and social services to 5,000 four-year old children and families living in poverty. Together with Washington's 31 Head Start programs the 34 ECEAP grantees hope to serve every four-year old in the state that is living at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

In 1991, the ECEAP state advisory board, motivated by the desire to rapidly increase the number of families served in a proactive, locally designed comprehensive model, endorsed a policy that recommended a gradual move to an "area agency model" of service delivery. This approach empowers local contractors to plan, develop, and administer clusters of programs that are uniquely appropriate (ethnically, geographically or socially) for locally designated communities. The goal of this process is to successfully design outreach strategies to serve these self-defined communities, through local collaboration and locally designed appropriate options. The "area agency" concept brings together local stakeholders to more efficiently broker services to ECEAP children and families. This integration eradicates fragmented and often times vertically structured resources that cannot effectively offer support to ECEAP families and replaces it with a system that is designed through cross-agency, cross-program collaboration and cooperation.

The Puget Sound Education Service District (ESD) is the largest contracting ECEAP agency in the state of Washington. This agency was one of six agencies participating in the pilot phase of "area agency model" development project, and is now one of several such models throughout the state. The Puget Sound ESD coordinates services for all ECEAP program sites outside the city of Seattle, in Pierce and King Counties, Washington. With a population of 2,000,000 and a square mile region of 3,803 miles, Pierce and King Counties are the two largest counties in the state of Washington.

Structure

The Puget Sound ESD operates its ECEAP programs through subcontracts with school districts and local community agencies. The ESD coordinates a community needs assessment process used by both its ECEAPs and Head Starts to determine local needs and designs expansion efforts. As the ECEAP Area Agency Contractor, Puget Sound ESD coordinates the overall operation of the program across the two counties, while local centers are administered by 22 subcontracting agencies. Subcontractors include school districts, community and technical colleges, a county

community action agency, private non-profit agencies, and the Puyallup Indian Nation. These agencies receive a budget from the ESD and hire and supervise their own center direct service staff. Other collaborators in the community process include Head Start, county health departments, city governments, Department of Social and Health Services, United Way, Kiwanis and other local groups.

The Puget Sound ESD uses a decentralized organizational model to coordinate and administer its early childhood programs. Its Head Start and ECEAP funds are administered separately due to programmatic and budgetary differences. However all early childhood programs are subject to the policy decisions made by the ESD's Board of Directors and the administrative decisions made by the ESD superintendent.

The area agency staff at the ESD includes an ECEAP director who supervises administrative staff along with coordinators for the program components including early childhood specialists, social workers, nurses, and nutritionists. These coordinators provide center staff with training, technical assistance, resource development, and monitoring services. The ECEAP director at Puget Sound ESD is also the director of the agency's Early Childhood Department, and in this capacity supervises the ESD Head Start director. Subcontracting agencies appoint their own center directors, who are employees of the subcontracting agency and who, for most all centers are not paid for with ECEAP funds, but have their time donated as in-kind contributions to the program. The ESD ECEAP director manages the overall program in partnership with the local agency center directors.

The ECEAP director responds to the recommendations of the two ECEAP Policy Councils, one representing each county. These councils are comprised of parents and community agency representatives. Two Health Services Advisory Committees provide support and recommendations to the health component of the program. These Health Service Advisory Committees are operated jointly by ECEAP and Head Start. There is one Committee for each county. Members include health professionals from the community, ECEAP parents, and staff. Recommendations are taken to Policy Council in the form of policy changes and /or work plan revisions. Ongoing procedures are also reviewed by this committee, and integrated into the program's staff manuals.

The ESD provides administrative support, office space, equipment, and supplies for the ECEAP director and staff. The ESD offers and coordinates staff training and technical assistance to its programs. Co-location with other ESD staff offers opportunities for additional resources and information. The ESD personnel offer insights and suggestions to ECEAP staff with regards to school district policies and procedures. Currently the majority of sub-contractors for Puget Sound ECEAP services are public schools. The ESD serves as an important liaison between public schools and the early childhood programs in this two county region.

The comprehensive services, education, health, social services and parent education and support are offered to the participating families of eligible four-year olds through a variety of options. A center-based option offers services to children at a center location, for a minimum of 10 hours per week, which is usually distributed over a four-day period. Parents of center-based programs receive at least two home visits a year from teaching staff and other home visits as needed from social service and health staff. A minimum of one and one-half hours of parent/staff contact is expected per month. This contact can take place in the form of meetings, phone calls, parent volunteering, or parent activity nights. More than two-thirds of the

participating ECEAP families served by the Puget Sound ESD are engaged in the center-based services.

Home-based options are those that provide the majority of services to the children and parents in the home. This delivery system is especially appropriate in communities where participant families are generally geographically dispersed over vast distances, making the center option not feasible for either the program staff or its families. Typically parents provide the education component of this program to their children with the support and guidance of ECEAP staff, who visit each family each week for one and one-half hours. Children also experience a group session with other four-year olds once weekly. In addition to education services, social services, health and parent involvement are provided in the home setting.

A third service delivery option offered by the Puget Sound ECEAP is a "locally designed" option. For example, three local community child care programs integrated the ECEAP program into its existing educational program for four-year olds and added a home visiting component and braiding resources. In addition, ESD ECEAP is integrating ECEAP services into family day care homes, offering parents the option of full day services in a family care setting, while at the same time upgrading the quality of child care for all children enrolled. There are several programmatic adaptations to the ECEAP model that have evolved. The flexible and innovative staff of the area agency has supported and encouraged locally generated solutions.

Mission

The mission of the Puget Sound ECEAP is "to pioneer leadership and service for our changing educational communities." They wish to accomplish this mission by serving as many young children in the King and Pierce County area as possible. The ESD will provide leadership and support to the "area agency" model as a vehicle to accomplish this important goal.

Developmental Characteristics

The Puget Sound ESD has a long history of successful early childhood program management. For twenty years the ESD coordinated a consortium of school districts and community agencies to provide Head Start programming to young children in King County areas not served by the city of Seattle. ECEAP funds made possible the expansion of these services to additional children and to Pierce and King Counties. Having administered Head Start for years, the ESD had established a natural liaison with school districts in the region. Local districts receive a wide variety of school-related services from the ESD.

Developing ECEAP programs in school districts came naturally to the ESD, while establishing relationships and developing programs with other community agencies has taken much more effort. The ESD has found that it must work much harder to initiate collaborations with community agencies, mostly because of their unfamiliarity with each others structures, needs and governance. As a result, the ESD ECEAP director has found that additional meeting time is needed to work out logistics. As their familiarity with local community agencies has grown, the ESD has re-examined its policies to best accommodate the collaboration of these agencies. For example, the ECEAP director led the subcontractor center directors in an

examination of the variation in costs and availability of resources across the Puget Sound ECEAP programming. The group agreed that due to the difficulty in accessing needed services, community agencies had significantly higher costs than school districts. This inequitable situation was remedied by adjusting the allocations of ECEAP funds to meet community shortfalls. Puget Sound ECEAP now funds its programs at two different levels to school districts and community agencies.

The development of the "area agency model" has impacted the Puget Sound ECEAP modes of operation in a number of ways. The ESD has worked hard to "package its program for export." They have developed application materials that are efficient and easily accomplished by local providers. The agency staff support the process with information about start-up and program operation. Potential providers needing assistance with locating health, or other resources or with developing their proposal can receive support from the area agency. When all proposals are developed the ESD submits this combined effort to the State Department of Community Development for area-wide funding. The integration of the local providers through the coordination of the Puget Sound ESD helps to insure that all providers will meet and exceed the state standards for child care and all ECEAP program standards.

The area-wide assessment conducted by the ESD insures equal access to ECEAP programming. The policy council has developed criteria for funding local efforts which include the numbers of unserved children in the region, the sub-contracting agency's capacity to support the program, their relationship with ECEAP, the density of the low-income population of the community, and special populations to be served. This area agency planning process insures equity of access to ECEAP funding.

As the area agency concept develops the ESD has sought new avenues of support for its sub-contractors. While programming is the responsibility of the sub-contractor, the ESD is committed to provide support and assistance. The ESD oversees program development, provides training and technical assistance, monitors individual programs for compliance, reports to the Department of Community Development, and organizes and supports the two county-wide policy councils.

As a result of the rapid growth of this area agency, the Puget Sound ESD has instituted several channels of communication with the ECEAP program staff. Regular meetings are held by the area agency so staff can address topics of concern. A variety of cross-training and informational meetings have been developed to increase sharing between staff assigned to specific components of the program. This encourages program staff at all programmatic levels to be informed about the whole program. Staff also receive regularly scheduled staff bulletins every two weeks which contain announcements, training opportunities, information about community activities, and other pertinent information.

Success

The Puget Sound ESD as an area agency has been able to distribute ECEAP funding to areas and programs where the need is greatest. The ESD with its financial and administrative support can support the most remote communities and help them develop an ECEAP program. This area agency model integrates resources and streamlines the process so that state monies can rapidly and

efficiently enter the system and with minimal bureaucratic process reach the states' neediest young children and families.

The comprehensive nature of the ECEAP programs itself gives in-depth health, education and social service support to the families of participant four year olds. Opportunities for "meaningful" parental involvement in all aspects of the programs, design, implementation and evaluation respectfully support parents and strengthens their ability to participate in community issues.

Future Plans

The Puget Sound ECEAP program hopes to increase its base of collaborators in the future. According to their most recent community needs assessments the following services must be designed and developed to increase the ESD's effective outreach for Washington's neediest children. The ESD hopes to:

1. To develop more full-day program options in collaboration with area childcare services
2. To improve resources for children and families whose primary language is other than English
3. To enhance mental health services for children and families
4. To continue the evolution of program quality, and
5. To develop more connections to and increase sharing with local Head Start programs

The Puget Sound ESD's area agency model will provide the needed leadership and structure to integrate services for all King and Pierce Counties young children thus pioneering leadership and service for Washington's changing educational communities.

YOUTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

Introduction

The Youth Information Management Task Force of Yellowstone County, Montana was established to make relevant case materials available to all agencies involved with referred youth and to share information in order to facilitate coordinated case management. This Task Force currently serves any referred youth up to sixth grade who lives in Yellowstone County. The primary service recipients have experienced chronic problems that require immediate intervention.

This integrated effort provides information from a wide variety of agencies concerned with or providing treatment and/or intervention services to troubled children from distressed families of this region of Montana. Yellowstone County is located in the southeastern section of the state which has a population of 120,600 in a 2,624 square mile area.

Structure

Members of the Youth Information Management Task Force include the: county school districts, sheriff's office, police departments of Billings and Laurel, Department of Family Services, and offices of the county commissioners, court services and County District Attorney. All member organizations and individuals have signed a contractual agreement to the purposes and confidentiality of the Task Force.

At any particular Task Force information sharing session, representatives from the appropriate agencies who are concerned or affected by the referred youth attend. In most cases this would include the principal, a counselor, a behavior management specialist from the schools, representatives from child protective services, a court service representative and the County Attorney. The team attempts to identify options, selects appropriate solutions, and coordinates case management. Each case is assigned to the coordinator who identifies a primary agency responsible for treatment coordination.

Referrals to the Task Force can be made by any participating agency. Schools are currently referring the majority of cases to the Task Force. Children can be referred if they are chronically truant, show signs of neglect, or sexual/physical abuse, if two or more agencies are involved with the child, or there is a need to expediate a case. Initially the county commissioner's office funded a part-time coordinator to assist the project. Subsequently, a full-time coordinator has been funded through a mix of contributions from the county budget, the city school district, county school districts, and the county drug-free consortium. This coordinator is housed in the Billings Public School District.

The Task Force meets on a weekly basis to share information regarding youth who are referred for review and to follow up on previously reviewed individuals. Confidentiality requirements of the Task Force are spelled out in its contractual agreements with each participating agency. Occasionally representatives of other for-profit agencies, such as drug and alcohol treatment facilities, are invited to

attend. As the county attorney has the legal rights to all information shared within the Task Force, it was the logical agency to develop policies and procedures to enable formal information sharing.

Mission

The stated mission of the Youth Information Management Task Force is to provide for the enhancement of information sharing and services for K-6 children who are denied adequate educational opportunities by those responsible for their care. This mission is carried out through the legal exchange of information amongst agencies concerned with a youth who is eligible for referral. The intent is to ascertain a response to the youth before a crisis stage is reached.

Developmental Characteristics

In 1989, a couple of school principals met and discussed some particularly troubling cases of children from distressed families who were chronically truant, a fellow principal suggested that they contact the local county attorney about their concerns. The county attorney, himself an involved parent in the schools, was able to organize a meeting of representatives of all the agencies in the county concerned with youth prevention, intervention and treatment services. The county attorney was able to bring his perspective on information management to this effort by serving in a coordinating and catalytic manner. From his perspective he was able to engage the concerned citizens of the community to support prevention and early intervention efforts to front-end the system and to reduce the growing numbers of youth who enter the juvenile justice system.

Drawing on a model of contractual agreement for agency "buy in" which the county attorney had learned about in Ventura County, California, the attorney engaged the attention of the agency representatives long enough for an active group to become established and gain the support of the county commissioner. Issues of turf, confidentiality, and information sharing were addressed up front and a method of conflict resolution adopted.

Each of the participant agencies contribute valuable information and perspectives. This cross-fertilization of information has given way to innovative case management and problem solving. The schools have raised awareness about the number and types of youth who are demonstrating distress and dysfunction. They contribute resources and staff expertise to work with families during the school day. The county attorney's office offers awareness of the implications of types of asocial behaviors that may lead to criminal potential and, as stated above, has contributed to the inception and structure of the Task Force. The police and sheriff's departments contribute information about peer group relationships of troubled youth before and after school hours and Child Protective Services offers insights into dysfunctional family dynamics which impact these youth. Together members of the task force agree that each participant has gained from the others in a greater appreciation and understanding of the limitations and resources affecting each agency's effort to intervene for troubled youth.

As a result of these meetings and this combined case management approach, participants have begun to alter systems and prevent wasteful energy expenditures by reducing the duplication of efforts, promoting an understanding of real limits to

successful solutions, and expanding their perspectives and knowledge base. Concrete changes such as the revision of school intake forms to incorporate information about the child's family has helped to expediate access to information when needed. There has also been some interest by the participants to identify and modify policies and systems which impair the effective identification and treatment of affected youth.

Successes

The Youth Information Task Force reports that service coordination has definitely increased as a result of this process. Schools have increased their referrals substantially. All participant agencies have become increasingly supportive and involved with the services the team has provided. The Task Force has provided an opportunity for participants to "sit down and communicate."

Outcomes for children have improved because the responses are quicker and more organized, thus preventing children from falling through the "cracks" in the system.

Identification of and passage of legislation that would remove barriers to collaboration, increase revenue and resources for such projects have occurred. The information sharing has led to knowledge expansions of its participants with regards to capabilities and limitations of service agencies, and an awareness of the unmet needs of the community.

Future Plans

The strong involvement of the justice system has focused solutions which often involve confrontive strategies to set clear goals and policy limits on families. In most complex intervention and treatment cases this approach can be most effective. The Task Force, however, recognizes the need to develop additional prevention strategies. This addition to the repertoire of the Task Force will require new collaborations with additional prevention agencies and new efforts towards earlier prevention of chronic problems now experienced by referred youth.

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